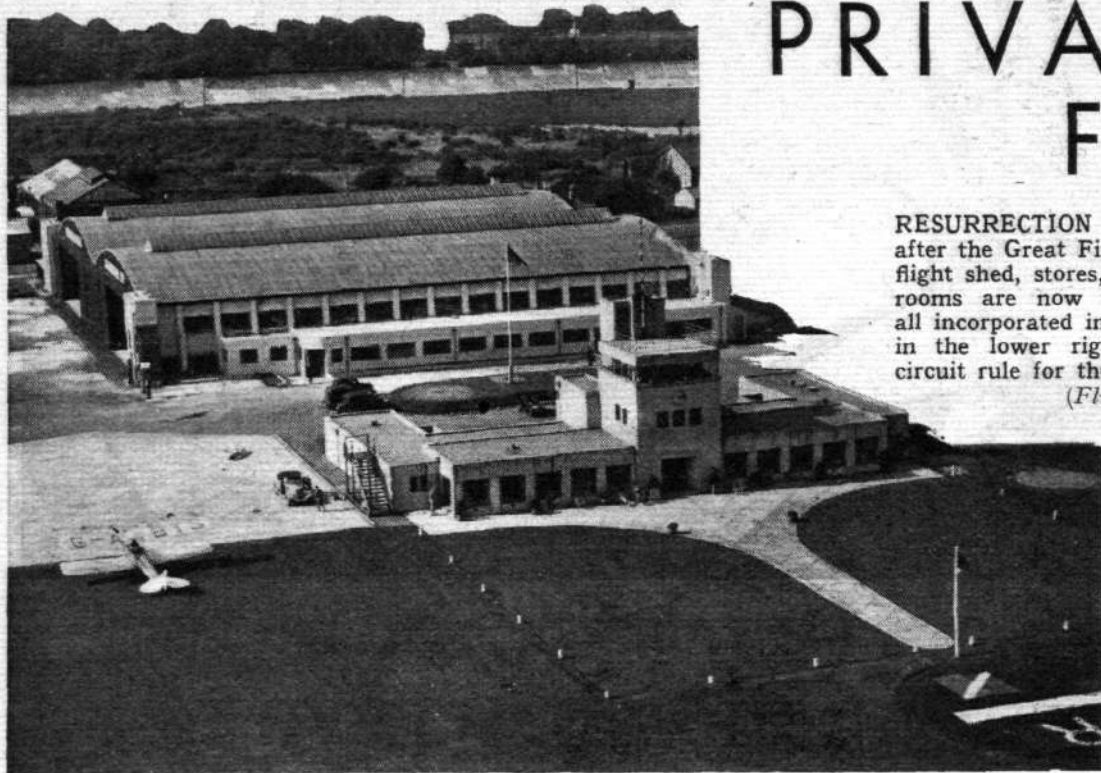




PRIVATE FLYING

RESURRECTION AT BROOKLANDS: A year after the Great Fire, the new Brooklands Aviation flight shed, stores, workshops, offices and lecture rooms are now in working order. They are all incorporated in one large building. The "R" in the lower right-hand corner concerns the circuit rule for the day ('ware St. George's Hill!). (Flight photograph.)

each budding transport pilot who is just going on to bigger stuff, sits at the feet of one particular oracle and believes every word he says. Otherwise, it would be sufficient to remind more easily influenced people that nearly every oracle has a different story to tell and that their stories do not often hang together.

It would be amusing to collect a series of statements about different aeroplanes and to tabulate them. Such a collection would be rather pointless unless the sources of the statements as well as the names of the machines were given—which would be both unkind and unfair, particularly as the sources may have changed their minds since I last heard their views.

If all this gossiping could be carried out at a round-table conference of designers, instructors and test pilots, nothing but good could come of it, but the usual result of bar discussions is that a minor defect is exaggerated out of all reason by people who have never even been up in the machine concerned. The Appleyard Aniseed monoplane, for instance, was once spun in off a gliding turn made with full bottom rudder at a speed of 50 m.p.h. or less; within a week one learnt that it was unsafe to make a gliding turn with the Aniseed at any speed less than 70 m.p.h. Some careless expert trailed a wing-tip with the Baldock Beagle, and immediately the bars hummed with the information that the Beagle (and its latest development, the Babbit) dropped a wing at the slightest provocation, and that it had to be brought in at an air speed of not less than 70 m.p.h.

On the other hand, I was once told that a certain little aeroplane was extremely strong and as safe as houses. Yet, later, I knew for a fact that it would only fly on full throttle, that it spun without much provocation at any low speed, and that its designer knew very little about designing either aeroplanes or perambulators. Another machine, I was told, sank on a level keel at the stall and could hurt nobody; when I tried it the "level sink" consisted of a sharp flick over almost on to its back—though admittedly the machine was immediately under full control again, and the amount of height lost was quite small. Yet another safe aeroplane obstinately refused to come out of a medium gliding turn during several seconds; if I hadn't had fifty feet of extra height I should have hit something. These, however, are exceptions; the bark is usually much worse than the bite.

Topics of the Day

Little Fellows

WHILE one or two manufacturers of ultra-lights have unfortunately faded away, the others are still carrying on with development work in preparation for the next season. They are disappointed not to have seen more customers among the thousands of young people who are undoubtedly interested in this flying business, but no really far-seeing person could have expected any sudden boom in such a class.

Confidence has to be built up gradually, and the maker who can stick it out and still produce something which is inexpensive, useful and reliable will see something for his pains in due course. The whole thing has been rather too experimental in the past year—prospective purchasers like to be given an impression of solidarity both in the machine and the background.

I still claim that what is really wanted is a pair of engines made by a reputable firm in the 30 h.p. and 50 h.p. sizes. If such engines were available and were likely to continue being available, the ultra-light manufacturers would have something around which to build their final ideas of an inexpensive aeroplane. At present any old engines—some of them years old—are fitted to singleton experiments. They can hardly expect to obtain results in such circumstances.

Needless to say, if any one of the well-known manufacturers had come out with a little fellow, the entire story would have been different. People are, somewhat naturally, loath to spend two or three hundred pounds on something which may or may not be satisfactory and which may or may not be a saleable proposition at the end of a year or two.

False Prophets

GOODNESS knows that no private or transport aeroplane is quite perfect, and that one or two of those which have, in the past, actually got into service, or been sold to private owners, have been thoroughly bad in a number of ways. Nevertheless, a great deal of libellous nonsense about certain machines has been persistently circulated amongst pilots and others from time to time, while a few machines, each possessing some dangerous characteristic, have received very little but praise from those who rule the gossip roost.

Unfortunately, each novice and near-novice, as well as

Subsidy Effects

SO far, I have only heard of one club which has shown any sign of reducing its fares following the introduction of the new subsidy scheme. It is early yet, and the differences are not, after all, so very great. The majority of the clubs had already fixed their rates at an almost uneconomic figure, and the new subsidy should just about balance the losses which many of them have suffered through the introduction of the Volunteer Reserve scheme.

All clubs, however, might find that it paid them to arrange a specially reduced rate for contract flying. Any